



FEMA

David A. Trissell: General Counsel

David A. Trissell was appointed FEMA General Counsel, and Associate General Counsel for Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R) within the Department of Homeland Security Office of the General Counsel, in October 2004. David began working at FEMA in 1995 where he handled both general law and litigation issues. Working as a Senior Trial Attorney he was responsible for the litigation of some of FEMA's most significant cases, including successfully defending the Agency's decision to build temporary housing in the U.S. Virgin Islands against environmental and endangered species claims, the recoupment of \$2.7 million in fraudulently obtained disaster benefits from a public transit authority, and numerous cases filed under the National Flood Insurance Program. His work also included representing the Agency and its officials in administrative EEO claims, constitutional challenges to the Agency's discretion in awarding federal disaster assistance, and arbitration under the National Flood Insurance Program.

In August 2001, he was asked by FEMA's then Deputy Director Michael Brown to serve in the Bush Administration's Transition and Planning Office to plan for the eventual U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The transition group developed policy and recommendations on how to coordinate and merge various departments and agencies into one eventual Department. Effective March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the DHS, and Mr. Brown was nominated by the President and confirmed as the first Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response.

Prior to joining FEMA, David worked under a contract at the U.S. Department of Justice, Environment and Natural Resources Division, General Litigation Section, handling mainly environmental and Fifth Amendment takings cases, as well as actions challenging federal resource agencies' decisions under the APA. While working at DOJ, he authored the following articles involving two seminal takings cases, Tabb Lakes Ltd. v. United States, 4 Fed. Cir. Bar J. 219 (Summer 1994), and M&J Coal Company and Mononga Development Company v. United States, 5 Fed. Cir. Bar J. 255 (Summer 1995). During law school he clerked in the Criminal Division at the U.S. Attorney's Office (W.Dist. OK), the U.S. Department of Justice's Environmental Enforcement Section in Washington, and with U.S. Magistrate Judge Bana B. Blasdel (W.Dist. OK). He also served as the Carl Albert Executive Fellow at the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, Office of General Counsel, working on boundary disputes between Oklahoma and Texas along the Red River.

David received his Bachelor of Arts degree and Juris Doctorate degrees from the University of Oklahoma. He is a native of Cherokee, Oklahoma.

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(202) 646-4600